

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 3-5 and 10-12 remain pending in this application. Claims 2, 9 and 15 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority and safe receipt of the priority document.

35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2, 9 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bruckert et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,226,317) in view of Fukasawa et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,463,660). Without admitting to the propriety of these rejections, the claims have been amended in order to expedite the issuance of subject matter indicated as being allowable.

Appl. No. 09/616,314
Amendment dated April 25, 2005
Reply to Office Action of January 25, 2005

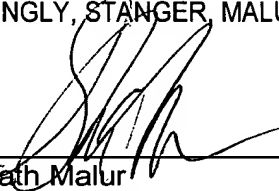
NIT-209

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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